

Cultivation of Corn and Cotton.

The cultivation of the corn crop is a subject that does not usually receive half of the attention it deserves. Many farmers altogether miss the great object of cultivation. They regard the killing of weeds as the prime object. This is not so. Whilst the killing of weeds is important, it is much more important that the soil should be so frequently stirred as to prevent their growth, and to so thoroughly aerate it as to render available the plant food in the soil and permit of the fine rootlets of the plants permeating every foot of the land and gathering from it the food needed for the growth of the crop. It is much easier to prevent the growth of weeds than to destroy them after they are grown. When the soil is so frequently stirred as to prevent a growth of weeds the germinating weed seeds are killed before there is time for the weeds to rob the corn plants of food and moisture. Every day weeds are permitted to grow they are robbing the soil of food and moisture and decreasing the supply for the corn crop. Cultivation, when properly done, conserves moisture and prevents weed growth. The cultivation which meets these requirements is not deep plowing with a turn plow—plowing off the soil from the plant and then turning it back again at the next working. A turning plow has no place in a corn field after the crop has been planted. All its work should have been done before the planting of the crop. Its use afterwards simply means the tearing of the fine rootlets of the plants and injury to the crop. The implement needed is a harrow or weeder for the first two or three workings, and a cultivator for the later workings, and these should not be set to disturb more than the top three inches of soil. Land cultivated in this way, kept level, and covered with a fine mulch of soil, will retain moisture to the surface and thus conduce to the rapid growth of the crop. Let the first cultivation be given with the harrow or weeder, running the same over all the land and not merely between the rows, before the plants break through the soil or immediately they have begun to appear, and especially is this important when a rain has fallen after the seed has been planted, but before it has had time to break through the surface. This system of cultivation with the weeder or harrow can, with advantage, be continued until the plants are six or eight inches high. Deep cultivation with the plow as compared with shallow, level cultivation with a cultivator, has been tested at many of the Experiment Stations, and the results have been invariably in favor of shallow, level cultivation. At the Illinois station in 1893 the yield per acre of corn on land cultivated shallow and with a careful avoidance of root injury or disturbance was one hundred bushels to the acre, as against seventy-eight bushels per acre on land where the roots were disturbed and pruned by deep cultivation. Let the cultivation of the crop be continued as long as it is practicable to go through the rows without doing injury to the stalks, and previous to the last cultivation sow either cow peas, crimson clover or sapling clover broadcast and work in with the cultivator. Do not follow the old practice of throwing a hill to the corn at this last working. It only tends to reduce the moisture content of the soil by leaving a larger surface exposed to the sun's rays. It is of importance to conserve this moisture and not to waste it. The idea that a furrow thrown to the row will hold up the corn is a fallacious one. It might have been true, when under the old system of cultivation with a plow, the roots had been badly cut off in the working of the crop, but under a system of shallow, level cultivation the roots of the crop will be so widely extended as to run across from row to row, and the stalks are sufficiently braced in all directions as to need no support from soil thrown to them.

The cultivation of the cotton crop should be on the same general lines laid down for the corn

crop, except that we would not use a harrow or weeder for the first two cultivations. Cotton plants are too tender to be treated in this way. The cultivation should be done by a weeder or cultivator running only between the rows. The cultivation in the rows is done by the hoe when chopping the crop to a stand. The importance of shallow, frequent cultivation is as great for the cotton crop as for the corn crop. At the last working, sow crimson clover in the cotton.—Southern Planter.

What Catawba Farmers are Doing.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

As I have not noticed any letters from the farmers of this section since I became a subscriber, I will try and give the readers of your most valuable a few ideas of what the farmers of this section of the country are doing.

We have had a very severe winter and late spring which has delayed crops of all kinds. What has been damaged very much on the account of the cold and dry weather of early spring. Apples and peaches will be almost a total failure owing to the late frosts.

Old Catawba is not to say on a boom, but I can say that it is crawling up very rapidly. People are working up and are taking a greater interest in farm work, and are buying more improved machinery every year. We have the rural mail delivery bringing our mails to our doors every day. One needful thing we lack in our county is the rural telephone system, which we think we will get in the near future.

The farmers are putting out larger crops of all kinds, especially cotton, which is being more than doubled over last year's acreage. They are making a great mistake by doing so. We have not increased the acreage of cotton any at all. We think it will be the wisest plan to raise what provisions are needed on the farm, then raise what cotton we can. Some of the farmers of this county are putting out nothing but cotton. They do not think about how scarce and high labor is until time comes to cultivate the crop; then they will see where they made their mistake. It will be too late then to howl about hard times.

L. P. EKARD.

Catawba Co., N. C.

Dirting Cotton.

If favored with sunshine and rains in normal quantities, before the next issue of the Headlight "dirting" cotton will be in vogue. This is the term used in some sections, perhaps generally, to express the act of throwing a little dirt, by means of a narrow plow-hoe and small heel-sweep, around the cotton plant after having been thinned to a stand by some farmers, to two plants in the hill by others. It is important that this work be done immediately after the hoe, especially if there be the slightest indication of rain. The hoe removes a proportionately great amount of dirt from the young plant, hence a very heavy rain, such as was visited upon the farms last spring, beats the plants down, and in some instances washes or covers it up. The dirting gives a support to the plant and a protection to the tender portion exposed by removing the dirt in hoeing. This first plowing should be done by a painstaking plow hand, as in many instances the careless hoe hand fails to break the dirt on one side of the plant, hence fails to kill the fine grass just peeping up, which becomes very troublesome in a short time. In "dirting" the competent plowman gets enough dirt around the plant to smother this grass, which would require more dirt at the second plowing than a flat cultivation would admit of.—Spartanburg Headlight.

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

Special Features of the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention Program.

Editors Progressive Farmer:

Several special features are being arranged for the coming meeting of the East Tennessee Farmers' Convention to be held in Knoxville June 1-3. Among other things, prizes will be offered for the best display of corn made by a farmer. The rules governing the contest are as follows: At least ten ears of corn must be placed on display not later than twelve o'clock on June 1st. Each sample must be carefully labeled with the name of the variety and the address of the grower. Only corn raised on East Tennessee farms will be eligible for the contest. It will be judged by a competent expert, who will publicly assign his reasons for his decisions after the contest is over. It is hoped that every farmer who has a good sample of corn will bring it to the convention. Twenty-five dollars in prizes will be offered in this contest as follows: First prize, \$10; second prize, \$7; third prize, \$5; fourth prize, \$3.

Another feature of great educational value will be an exhibit of various types of horses. Cash prizes to the amount of \$25 will be offered for the best display of horses. The idea is to have these animals exhibited on the grounds during the progress of the convention, and to have a competent expert judge them. He will make the reasons for his decision public, and at the conclusion of the contest, will explain the methods of breeding that should be pursued by Tennessee farmers in order to supply the market with the type of horses in demand at the present time. This should prove to be one of the most interesting and instructive features of the convention, and the prizes are being offered in the hope that some excellent representatives of the equine family may be placed on exhibition. Those who contemplate exhibiting either corn or horses should notify

ANDREW M. SOULE, Sec.

Knoxville, Tenn.

Remedy for Wild Onions.

The Landmark recently published a remedy for the wild onion taste on milk—put a spoonful of molasses in the cow's feed. Doubtless many people were disposed to smile at this simple remedy but the gentleman who furnished it is reinforced. Mr. Luther S. Griffin, of Union County, tells the Monroe Enquirer that his cows graze on onions as thick as wheat and there is not a trace of onion in milk or butter, because he flavors the cows' feed with two or three spoonfuls of molasses a day. The remedy is simple enough and inexpensive. The wild onion is an ever present pest and nuisance. If a way can be found to destroy it—by deep plowing as the Catawba County farmer recommends—or to destroy its effects, the country will be benefited.—Statesville Landmark.

"If the farmers of this county would diversify their crops and grow more cereals and hay instead of depending almost together on cotton, they would live better, make more money and their lands would be richer," said Capt. H. D. Stowe, yesterday. Capt. Stowe has just bought 50 bushels of cow-peas, which he will plant upon 50 acres of land now in grain, as soon as the grain harvesting is over. With cotton at any price, Captain Stowe contended, it would pay farms to diversify the crops.

It is the opinion of a large number of the best known farmers in the county that the emigration of the negroes from the farms will lead to the raising of crops which do not require constant work and to the use of a great deal more improved farming implements.—Charlotte Observer.

When planting the corn, don't forget to sow some pumpkin seeds along with it. They will grow together without injury to each other, and the pumpkins are good feed for cattle and hogs in the winter. Sow a couple of pounds of the Virginia Mammoth to the acre. They can be mixed with corn in the drill.—Exchange.